

UTAH'S SAGEBRUSH: GOING, GOING, GONE?

UTAH DIVISION OF WILDLIFE RESOURCES • AUTUMN 2003

wildlife

R E V I E W

A close-up photograph of a brown bear's head and shoulders, facing left. The bear is surrounded by dense autumn foliage in shades of red, orange, and brown. The bear's fur is dark brown and appears slightly damp or matted. The background is a soft-focus thicket of similar foliage.

**Henry Mountains bison, Fall fishing,
Gordon Creek Sage-grouse,
Deer decoys, Fishing memories**

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Photographer: Lynn Chamberlain

Photo at right: Wasatch Mountains
Photographer: Tom Pettengill





WILDLIFE REVIEW

Autumn

2003

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KEVIN CONWAY
 Director,
 Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

THANK YOU for picking up the spring, 2003 issue of the Wildlife Review. I hope you find it both educational and entertaining. Among the many stories in this issue is Brad Crompton's piece

DIRECTOR'S message



about the sage-grouse transplant in Gordon Creek. Sage-grouse populations in Utah and throughout the Intermountain West have suffered dramatic declines over the last 30 years. A combination of habitat loss and gradual degradation of vast areas of sagebrush-steppe rangelands across the West has led to the decline.

Prolonged drought and changing land use practices have contributed to the steep decline of sage-grouse to the point that both the Gunnison and Greater Sage-grouse have been petitioned for listing on the federal Endangered Species list. The pygmy rabbit, another animal totally dependent on sagebrush, has also been petitioned for listing.

We know from experience, that once a species has been federally listed, responsible land development can be severely

restricted or even stopped. This can lead to significant economic impacts, especially in already struggling rural Utah. For these reasons, I strongly believe we must take aggressive steps now to recover and enhance sagebrush-steppe habitat on a very large scale.

That's why the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources has launched the Habitat Initiative in Utah, an innovative new program aimed at bringing to bear the combined resources and expertise of state and federal land managers, along with private landowners throughout the state, to attack this looming crisis head on.

One of the important objectives of the Initiative is to immediately identify essential sagebrush-steppe and riparian habitats needing protection or targeted management and to begin designing projects to accomplish the Habitat Initiative's goal. Division of Wildlife Resources regional teams are already at work sifting through historic data and creating new assessments to help identify sagebrush-steppe lands essential to sage-grouse, mule deer and other targeted wildlife species statewide.

Habitat loss and degradation is the single most threatening issue facing wildlife in Utah. The Habitat Initiative will aggressively deal with this statewide problem, and I am committed to providing the funding and personnel necessary to achieve success. Look for more information about the Habitat Initiative in the news and in upcoming issues of the Wildlife Review. 🐾

Kevin K. Conway

BY JOHN FAIRCHILD,
HABITAT CONSERVATION COORDINATOR

UTAH'S

Sagebrush

GOING, GOING, GONE?

AT A TIME when most of Utah's outdoor recreationists were focused on fishing, camping, boating, or perhaps even baseball,

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources biologists were scrambling for information on one of the first casualties of Utah's five-year drought. Their search was done on horseback, in 4x4 trucks and aerially with helicopters. Wyoming big sagebrush, one of several subspecies of big sagebrush in the state, was losing the battle against old age and drought. The consequences of this could prove severe for Utah's mule deer, sage-grouse and other sagebrush-dependent wildlife species. By the end of June, biologists had documented upwards of 400,000 acres of dead and dying sagebrush.

DWR biologists first began noticing large areas of stressed sagebrush while on their spring range rides. These rides are conducted on most winter ranges each year to observe range conditions and document any losses of deer and elk during the winter.

Sagebrush is an evergreen shrub, and normal, healthy shrubs are just beginning new growth during these rides. However, the shrubs they observed last spring had shed most or all of their leaves. After a few good rainstorms, most of the shrubs sprouted a few live stems off of the few remaining live branches, but the areas still looked devastated.

Sagebrush-stressed areas were reported in an elevation zone ranging from 5,000 to 6,000 feet and mostly in the rain shadows of adjacent mountain ranges in the eastern half of the state. Areas most affected were the foothills west of Price, many areas in the Uinta Basin north of Highway 40, the Tavaputs Plateau (commonly referred to as the Book Cliffs), areas north and west of Monticello, the foothills east and west of Panguitch, the lower slopes on the east side of Monroe Mountain between Antimony and Koosharem, and the lower foothills between Newcastle and Enterprise.

In "good" years, these areas may receive 12 inches of precipitation. During the current drought, they've been lucky to receive half that amount. All of these areas provide important winter habitat for mule deer, which, during normal winters, survive by eating sagebrush. In fact, the increase in deer populations throughout the Intermountain States, since pioneers first introduced livestock on the western ranges, is due in large part to the increase in sagebrush and other woody browse species on the winter ranges.

Many of these areas also support struggling populations of sage-grouse.



Sagebrush provides an important source of food for deer during winter.

These birds rely on sagebrush year-round for food and cover and may travel many miles between their winter and summer ranges to find suitable habitat. The plant communities they select are always dominated by sagebrush. Numerous petitions have been filed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to list the Greater and Gunnison Sage-grouse species as an endangered species under provisions of the Endangered Species Act. In conjunction with the USFWS, the DWR has completed a statewide conservation plan for both species. Habitat

conservation is a major component of the plan.

Wyoming big sagebrush occurs in a narrow band at the base of most of Utah's mountain ranges at elevations ranging from 5,000 to 6,500 feet. It's a long-lived species, often exceeding 100 years old. Historically, however, sagebrush stands were probably much younger. The combination of live-stock grazing, fire suppression and increases in mule deer populations has significantly impacted plant communities dominated by this shrub. Over the last 20 years, DWR biologists working on the

division's Big Game Range Trend Project have documented a downward trend in the condition of many of these sites statewide. Many stands have become decadent, and few young sagebrush have become established to take their place.

Native grasses and forbs, which once functioned as important protective cover for watersheds, forage for herbivores and as nesting cover for ground-nesting birds, have been crowded out. In many areas, weedy annuals have replaced them, most notably the non-native annual grass — cheatgrass. Seeds from this plant germinate in the fall. By spring, plants are well established and compete effectively for the moisture native grasses and forbs need to survive.

During the drought, cheatgrass has made dry areas even drier. It sets seed early, dries up by mid-June, and

"Once these areas burn it's difficult, if not impossible, for sagebrush to become reestablished."



creates extreme fire hazard conditions in many areas of the state. Once these areas burn it's difficult, if not impossible, for sagebrush to become re-established. The recent increase in wildfires is partly due to the spread and increased dominance of this plant in the understory of sagebrush ranges.

SO, WHAT CAN BE DONE to conserve this important habitat for wildlife? That's a question that the Division of Wildlife Resources, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service and other land management agencies are trying to answer.

Last fall, DWR biologists met in Richfield for three days to prepare a "roadmap" for a large-scale, habitat conservation initiative. The group set a habitat restoration goal of 10,000 acres per region per year for the next 10 years. That's 50,000 acres per year—or 500,000 acres in the next ten years.

To meet that goal, additional biologists will be hired who have expertise in habitat restoration techniques. A seed warehouse, capable of storing up to 600,000 pounds of seed, will be built in Ephraim so seed can be custom-mixed and readily available for projects. Range restoration equipment will be purchased so projects can be completed during the narrow window that's available for seeding in the fall.

Research biologists from the DWR's Great Basin Research Center will continue to conduct research that supports the habitat initiative. They'll also provide technical assistance to regional DWR biologists in planning and implementing seeding projects. DWR biologists will develop partnerships with state and federal land management agencies, and conservation organizations, to work cooperatively to improve habitat conditions in high priority conservation areas. Working through Soil Conservation Districts statewide, and with assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the DWR stands ready to assist private landowners in their efforts to restore rangelands in these same areas.

It's a challenging time for anyone



JOHN FARCHILD

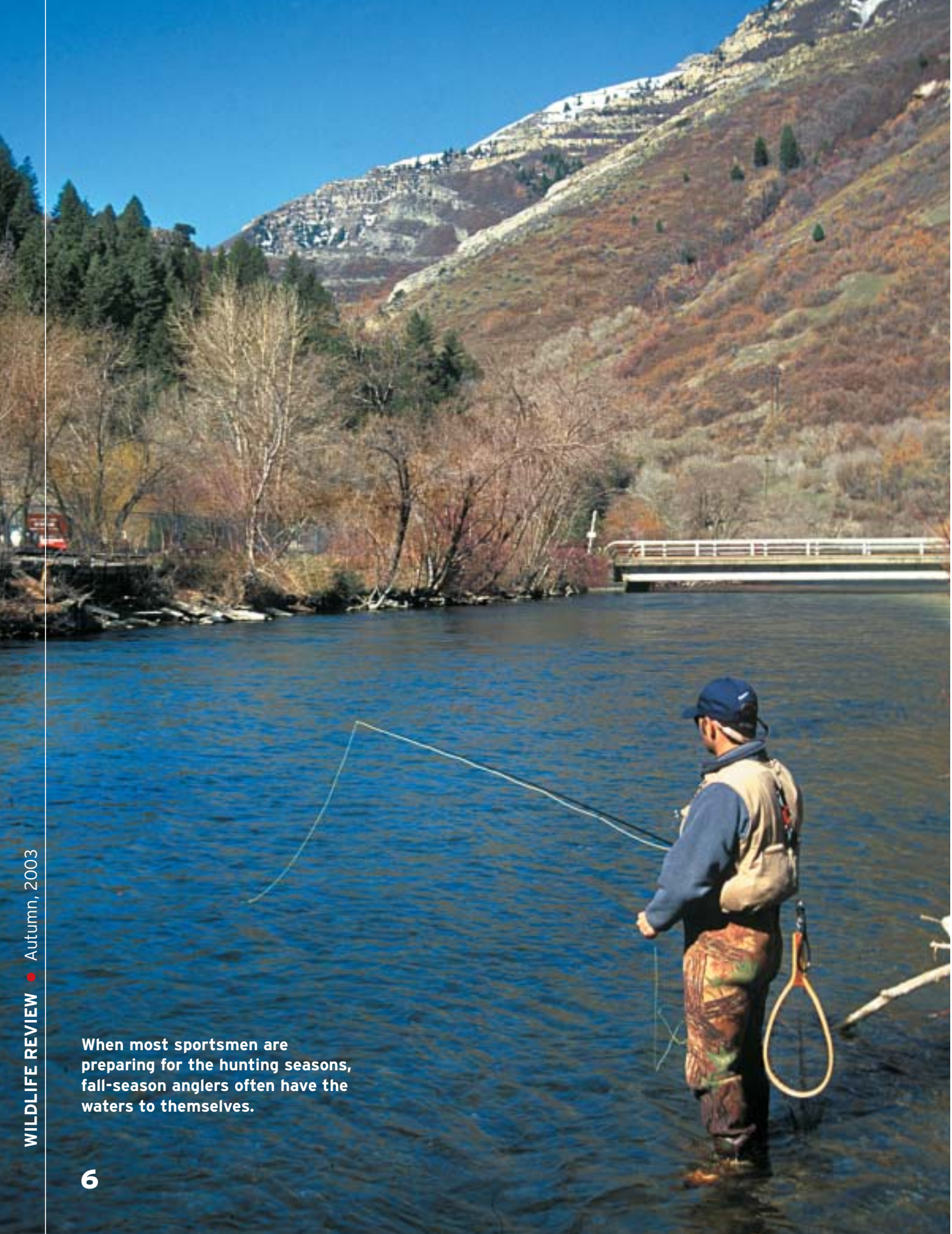
The top photo, taken southwest of Cedar City in 1998, shows many healthy sagebrush. After five years of drought, more than 90 percent of the sagebrush in the same area has died or is considered decadent.

involved in wildlife habitat conservation. The die-off that started last spring reminded land managers that range conditions in these lower elevation sagebrush zones won't improve with changes in management practices alone. To find success, large-scale seeding projects are needed along

with wise stewardship of our rangelands. That, and a little rain.

For more information on the DWR's Range Trend Project and Great Basin Research Center, check out their Web sites at ag.utah.gov/mktcons/rangeland/range.htm and www.wildlife.utah.gov/gbrc/. 🐾

When most sportsmen are preparing for the hunting seasons, fall-season anglers often have the waters to themselves.



BY DON WILEY,
CENTRAL REGION AQUATICS MANAGER

COOL WEATHER,

Hot fishing

THE TEMPERATURE is cooling. Leaves are changing color. Birds can be seen overhead as they fly south.

To the surface of my favorite water, a fish rises and my hope increases. The fall is the most beautiful time of the year. Coupled with cooler temperatures and changing colors are sportsmen preparing for their hunts.

For me, fall is an excellent time to take in some late season fishing action. Changing temperatures after a long summer make being outdoors more enjoyable. And in the fall, Utah's reservoirs, lakes and streams offer a wide variety of quality fishing opportunities, ranging from community fishing ponds to hiking with a GPS unit to some remote beaver ponds that seldom see anglers.

Fall provides some of the best fishing experiences of the year. While most of the big fish that I have seen caught are taken earlier in the year, fall may be the best time in terms of numbers of fish. The water levels in rivers and streams are usually low. This means that fish congregate in pools and undercut banks that pro-

vide them cover. The clear water at this time of the year allows you to get the fish's attention from a greater distance, but it also means that you have to be extra cautious not to spook the fish. To build up fat reserves, trout feed fairly aggressively during the last few weeks before winter and are more eager to take the worms, lures or artificial baits anglers generally use.

Drought conditions have significantly impacted the fisheries in some of Utah's lakes and reservoirs. Some lakes and reservoirs have not received a full quota of fish from state hatcheries because of low water levels and/or high temperatures.

Instead, many of these fish have been stocked into lakes and reservoirs that have more stable water levels and temperatures. For example, Jordanelle Reservoir in northern Utah received an extra 15,000 rainbow trout in 2002. This has resulted in some excellent fishing in 2003. Keep an eye open for lakes and reservoirs that have had good water levels the past couple of years—chances are they've received a few more fish than originally intended.

In the Strawberry Valley, nothing signals the start of fall like the begin-

ning of the kokanee salmon run. By early August, large numbers of kokanee can be seen near tributaries and shorelines as they begin to stage for the spawn. One of the best ways to catch kokanee in the fall is to fish with brightly colored lures or flies in the areas where they're congregated. Anglers who target them can find excellent fishing action.

Fall also provides opportunities to catch some nice bass. As the temperature drops, bass become active and prepare for winter by feeding more heavily. Deer Creek Reservoir, Jordanelle Reservoir, and Utah Lake provide excellent opportunities to catch a lot of bass, with a good chance of catching some bigger ones. In the fall, it's not uncommon for bass anglers to catch 20 to 30 fish in a couple of hours.

The best way to fish for bass is to cast toward the shore. Bass habitat in Utah reservoirs includes rock and brush. It's important to remember that bass feed primarily on baitfish, so try to imitate the size and color of baitfish in the body of water you're fishing.

As with bass, walleye also become more active as water temperatures cool, providing anglers with good chances to catch walleye in the fall. As the water temperatures cool, walleye school and begin to feed more actively to store reserves for the winter. So far this year, Deer Creek Reservoir has produced some nice walleye. Other reservoirs that should produce good walleye fishing this fall include Willard Bay, Utah Lake, Starvation Reservoir, and Lake Powell.

Some of the best places to fish for walleye are rocky shorelines and structures on the lake bottom. Trolling with crankbaits, bottom bouncers and spinners is a commonly used method to catch walleye.

Community fishing ponds in Utah are also good places to fish in the fall. They're widely distributed throughout the state and fall fishing can be very good at them. They're stocked with trout in the spring and in the fall, when the water temperatures are cooler. During the summer months,

"While most of the big fish that I have seen caught are taken earlier in the year, fall may be the best time in terms of numbers of fish."



© RICHARD HEPWORTH

Stuart Hepworth demonstrates the effectiveness of fall fishing.

when water temperatures are too hot for trout, they're stocked with warm water fish species, including catfish, bass, and/or bluegill.

Fall stocking of trout in these ponds usually begins in late August or early September. Many of Utah's community fisheries are accessible to anglers with physical disabilities and provide excellent angling opportunities in the fall, with fewer people.

The following is a list of waters throughout Utah that should provide good fall fishing with few crowds, no bugs, gorgeous scenery, sunny, cool days, and excellent prospects for a good catch:

Northern Region:

- Pineview Reservoir (*tiger muskies*)
- Bear Lake (*lake trout, whitefish, cutthroat trout*)
- Willard Bay Reservoir (*wipers*)
- Weber River (*brown trout, whitefish*)
- Logan River (*brown trout, cutthroat trout*)

Northeastern Region:

- Current Creek Reservoir (*cutthroat trout*)
- Flaming Gorge Reservoir (*rainbow trout, lake trout, smallmouth bass, kokanee salmon*)
- Moon Lake (*rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, splake, kokanee salmon, whitefish*)
- Pelican Lake (*largemouth bass, bluegill*)
- Green River (*brown & rainbow trout*)

Central Region:

- Jordanelle Reservoir (*rainbow trout, brown trout, yellow perch, smallmouth bass*)
- Deer Creek Reservoir (*rainbow trout, smallmouth bass, walleye*)
- Strawberry Reservoir (*rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, kokanee salmon*)
- Utah Lake (*white bass, largemouth bass, walleye, catfish*)
- Provo River (*cutthroat trout, brown trout*)

Southern Region:

- Fish Lake (*splake, lake trout, rainbow trout, brown trout*)
- Boulder Mountains (*brook trout*)
- Otter Creek Reservoir (*rainbow trout*)
- Kolob Reservoir (*cutthroat trout*)
- Beaver River (*brown trout, rainbow trout*)

Southeastern Region:

- Huntington Reservoir (*tiger trout*)
- Joes Valley Reservoir (*trophy splake trout potential*)
- Scofield Reservoir (*rainbow trout, cutthroat trout*)
- Huntington Creek (*brown trout*)
- Lower Fish Creek (*brown trout*)

Take advantage of fall fishing. In addition to changing colors and cooler temperatures, you'll enjoy less-crowded conditions and fishing that can be red-hot. The only tough decision might be deciding where you want to "wet your line!" 🐟

BY SCOTT WHITE & ED MEYERS,
CONSERVATION OFFICERS

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Real deer?

Editor's Note: The first simulator experience was provided by Sgt. Scott White, the second by Investigator Ed Meyers. Also, the "hunters" in these experiences are poachers. They are not representative of the thousands of ethical and law-abiding Utah sportsmen.

THE AIR WAS CLEAR and the canyon quiet on a dark October night during Utah's general buck deer hunt. About an hour-and-a-half after dark we heard a truck driving down the road towards us. We slipped behind a tree and waited. As the truck rounded the corner, its headlights illuminated the eyes of a small three-point deer on the side of the road. The truck stopped just ten yards from us and we heard the driver chamber a cartridge in his rifle. He aimed the rifle out the window and "boom!" shot the deer from the truck, only twenty yards away. To his surprise, the deer didn't fall.

Conservation officers Ray Loken, Jerry Schlappi and I stepped out from the trees and informed him of his mistake—he had just shot a deer simulator.

As we walked past the truck, we saw a dead buck deer lying in its bed. Safety was our first concern, and we took control of his firearm and vehicle. As officer Schlappi wrote the shooter a

citation, another vehicle came down the road and stopped. I asked the driver if he needed help. "No," he said, "I just heard the shot and I'm here to help my brother with the deer." He obviously didn't realize he was talking to a state wildlife officer. I told him there was no need to field dress the deer his brother had shot, and he went back to camp.

A few minutes later, another vehicle arrived. It was the shooter's father, and he wasn't happy. I talked with him and was amazed to find that he wasn't disappointed with his son's actions. He was extremely upset, however, that we were using a deer simulator. He asked why we continue to use "fake deer." I informed him that this incident was a prime example. I told him as long as people continue to illegally kill deer at night, we would continue to use wildlife simulators.

ON A COLD OCTOBER NIGHT near the Colorado border, another buck waited near a road.

Nearby, conservation officer Rudy Musclow and I sat silently in the blackness. The road was used by hunters traveling

from their camps in Utah to their hunting area in Colorado. We had documented numerous problems with Colorado hunters illegally killing deer in the area.

"I think I hear someone coming," I said. A distant putting sound grew louder. The road was very rough and we could see the headlights of two vehicles rattling towards us. As they approached, I donned a pair of night vision goggles. "They're four-wheelers," I said to officer Musclow. Through the green glow of the goggles, I could clearly see the first man approaching. His rifle rattled violently in its rack on the front of the machine. The man on the other OHV had fallen behind on the rocky road.

As the first man arrived, he started up a slight rise in the road. His headlights briefly illuminated a nice buck bedded on the opposite side. He stopped suddenly and backed up to relight the animal. The man raised his binoculars to look at the buck, which was only 30 feet away. The buck's eyes glowed in the headlights as he stared back at the man.

The man turned to look for his partner, who was slowly coming up the road behind him, and then turned back to look at the buck. Neither he nor his partner had a Utah deer permit, but he thought there would be no witnesses to what he was planning. We could hear the man breathing heavily from our position only 15 feet away. Seconds seemed like years as we waited for him to make his decision.

The second OHV soon arrived and stopped just behind the first. "Look at that buck!" the first man said. Through the goggles I could see that both men were dressed in hunter orange.

The second man, the younger of the two, crept up to the lead OHV with his rifle. "He's just lying there—not moving," the younger man said. They studied the buck, the older man with his binoculars and the younger through his rifle scope. "He just flicked his ear," the older hunter whispered. The men discussed killing the buck. "He's a pretty nice buck, but I think I can get a better one," the younger man said.



SCOTT WHITE

Officers Scott White and Ray Loken pose with a deer simulator used to catch unsuspecting poachers.

They tried to contact another hunter back in their camp on their radio, to ask if he wanted to tag the deer when they killed it. The man at camp didn't answer. Miraculously, the deer never moved. "We're a long way from the nearest camp — no one will hear," the older man said. "If you want to see something die, I'll kill it," the younger man finally said. "Kill 'im," the older man replied. The rifle's report broke the silence a full two hours after dark.

"State wildlife officers — don't move!" I shouted as we sprung from the bushes and lit up the suspects with our flashlights.

These experiences illustrate the valuable role wildlife simulators play in the field of wildlife law enforcement. The simulator program is designed to apprehend violators of wildlife laws and educate hunters. Every person who stops at a simulator is contacted by a conservation officer and informed of the simulator and what the DWR is doing with the program.

Simulators are full-bodied mounts of wild animals and birds placed in habitat preferred by the species that's being simulated. The DWR uses many simulator species, including elk, deer, antelope,

grouse, turkeys and rabbits. Road-killed and poached animals are often used in the program.

With years of use and a strong educational program, the violation rate for many wildlife crimes has declined, particularly the killing of deer and elk at night. Almost everyone we talk with while we're using a simulator has heard of the program. The deterrent effect of not knowing if the animal is real or a simulator, or if there is a conservation officer behind a nearby tree, has further decreased the poaching problem in many areas.

Officers have watched many people stop to observe and photograph simulators. Almost everyone encountering the simulators believe they're live wildlife. Only after observing the motionless simulator for a period of time, approaching it without it fleeing or attempting to shoot it do people identify it as a simulator. In fact, some people are so convinced that the animal is real, they continue to shoot even after being told by an officer to stop shooting. After many years of experience using simulators, one thing stands out — most poachers shoot the simulator within seconds of seeing it. This tells

us the individuals are intent on violating laws and take wildlife illegally.

With so few conservation officers in the field, the use of simulators allows officers, the wildlife and the potential violator to be in the same place, at the same time. Simulators are used in areas where officers have noted problems or where they've received reports of wildlife violations.

Simulators are also used to address public safety concerns by helping apprehend people who shoot from their vehicles or from public highways. While using simulators, officers have witnessed and addressed numerous unsafe and illegal acts. They've watched people shoot through vehicle windows and past passengers in their vehicle. By holding these reckless individuals accountable for their unsafe and illegal acts, conservation officers protect wildlife and public safety.

Many other states also employ simulators in the war on poaching. Their use has been accepted and upheld in courts across the country, and they'll continue to be a valuable tool to conservation officers in keeping people safe and protecting Utah's wildlife resources. 🐾

BY SERGEANT TONY WOOD

HELP STOP

Poaching HOTLINE

THE UTAH DIVISION of Wildlife Resources was one of the first wildlife agencies in the country to institute a toll-free wildlife violation report telephone line. Started in 1981, the Help Stop Poaching Hotline allows the public to report wildlife violations directly to Wildlife Resources law enforcement personnel.

You can report wildlife crimes by calling 1-800-662-DEER (3337). Most wireless phone users may now dial *DEER to reach us toll free. The hotline is staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days per year by citizen volunteers who wish to assist with Utah's anti-poaching effort. You may also report wildlife crimes on our Web site at wildlife.utah.gov/law/hsp.

Over the past twenty years, countless wildlife violators have been apprehended and prosecuted as a result of complaints received from concerned citizens. More than 500 wildlife investigations were initiated by calls placed to the Help Stop Poaching Hotline in 2002. This number represents nearly one-third of the total investigations completed by DWR officers annually.

The complaints received vary from

juveniles illegally killing songbirds to anonymous callers reporting cases involving multiple felony counts of wanton destruction of protected wildlife (poaching).

Cases initiated through the Help Stop Poaching Hotline are a high priority with Wildlife Resources law enforcement. There are only 44 field officers throughout the state and their patrol districts average more than 2,000 square miles. As you can see, cooperation and assistance from the public is critical to the success of the

DWR's law enforcement efforts.

Last year alone, DWR conservation officers documented the illegal killing of 1,385 fish and 1,125 animals. In 2002, the total value of wildlife lost to poachers in Utah was more than \$645,000. Among the animals and birds taken illegally in 2002 were the following:

Deer	411	Bear	14
Elk	169	Ducks	64
Bobcat	60	Antelope	18
Moose	19	Turkey	10

While you're out enjoying Utah's great outdoors, DWR conservation officers urge you to report any information you come across about a known or suspected wildlife violation. Record as much of the following information as possible, and call the Help Stop Poaching Hotline immediately:

- Date, time and location of the violation
- License plate number of the suspect's vehicle and its direction of travel
- Vehicle description, including identifying features, dents, stickers, etc.
- Description of the person(s) involved
- Details of the violation
- Statements of the violators, if overheard

Do not attempt to intercede in a violation or to detain those responsible. Be safe, and be a good witness! 🐾



Our Help Stop Poaching exhibit is a popular feature at sportsman events.



BY RON HODSON

THE HENRY MOUNTAINS

Bison herd

A UNIQUE GEM

UTAH'S Henry Mountains bison herd is a unique and somewhat unknown resource. It's one of only a handful of free roaming bison herds (a herd that is not fenced or confined in anyway) in North America. It is also one of only two free roaming herds in the lower 48 states that's managed primarily by hunting.

The herd's history

The herd started 60 years ago when a group of sportsmen from the Carbon-Emery Wildlife Federation, along with what was then the Utah Department of Fish and Game, cooperated to transplant this symbol of the American West back into the wild in Utah. Eighteen bison, or buffalo as they are popularly known, were transported from Yellowstone National Park to Utah in large wooden crates that were chained to flatbed trucks. The 18 buffalo, consisting of 15 cows and three bulls, were trucked to a spot on the San Rafael Desert between the

towns of Green River and Hanksville and were released. The three bulls left the area almost immediately and traveled more than 50 miles to the northwest, where they were observed near the town of Ferron. The following year, five more bulls were brought from Yellowstone and were released with the cows that had stayed on the

San Rafael Desert.

Within a few years the herd moved south, across the Dirty Devil River, and took up residence on the Burr Desert. By the mid-1950s the herd was using Mount Ellen in the Henry Mountains during the summer and the Burr Desert in the winter. In the mid-1960s they quit using the Burr Desert and made the Henry Mountains their year-round home. Bison now use all three of the mountains that make up the Henrys: Mount Ellen, Mount Pennell, and Mount Hillers, as well as the surrounding benches. A helicopter survey conducted last summer found the herd numbered around 400 animals.

Bison thrive on the Henrys

Most people think of buffalo as being plains animals. While they certainly thrived on the plains, bison also were historically found in mountainous habitats. A trip to the Henry Mountains, which are located between Hanksville and Bullfrog, will show that bison are adaptable to a variety of habitats.

The area where the buffalo roam on the Henrys is mostly Bureau of Land Management land that varies between elevations of 4,800 to 11,500 feet. The buffalo use many different vegetative communities including salt desert shrub, pinyon-juniper, aspen conifer, and subalpine. They appear



Free-roaming Henry Mtns. bison are managed through a hunting strategy.

equally at home on the flat bench areas of Stevens or Swap mesas as they do at 11,000 feet on the steep grassy slopes of Mount Ellen, where one might more readily expect to see bighorn sheep. The bison currently use approximately 600 square miles, which is an area more than twice the size of Davis County.

More about the herd

Wherever a buffalo is found, it's an extremely impressive animal. Bulls may stand more than six feet at the shoulder and weigh up to 2,000 pounds. Even a 1,000-pound cow is more animal than most sportsmen are used to dealing with. Both sexes have horns and at times can be difficult to tell apart. During the mating season, or rut, it's possible to observe bulls engaged in great shoving matches to determine who is dominant and gets to do the breeding. They emit a low guttural sound that is half grunt and half growl and wholly impossible to forget!

The peak of the rut occurs in late July or early August. Gestation takes nine months, with most of the calves born in May. There is some breeding that occurs late, however, and it's not unusual to observe calves in the same herd that differ in age by a couple of months. Calves are orange in color for the first six months of their lives and provide a contrast to the chocolate brown behemoths that make up the rest of the herd.

References to the Henry Mountains bison "herd" seem to imply that all of the individuals run around together in the same group. While that was the case during the first few years after the transplant, it's no longer the case. The truth is that the "herd" is actually made up of many groups that vary in size from as few as one to as many as 150 individuals.

Even these groups are dynamic and subject to change at any time. It's common to see a group split into two or more groups in the morning and then to see one of those groups join with yet another in the afternoon. There are times, especially during the

rut, when as many as 200 to 300 animals may all be within five miles of each other, and other times when the "herd" is scattered in small groups of five to 20 animals across the entire 600 square miles they use.

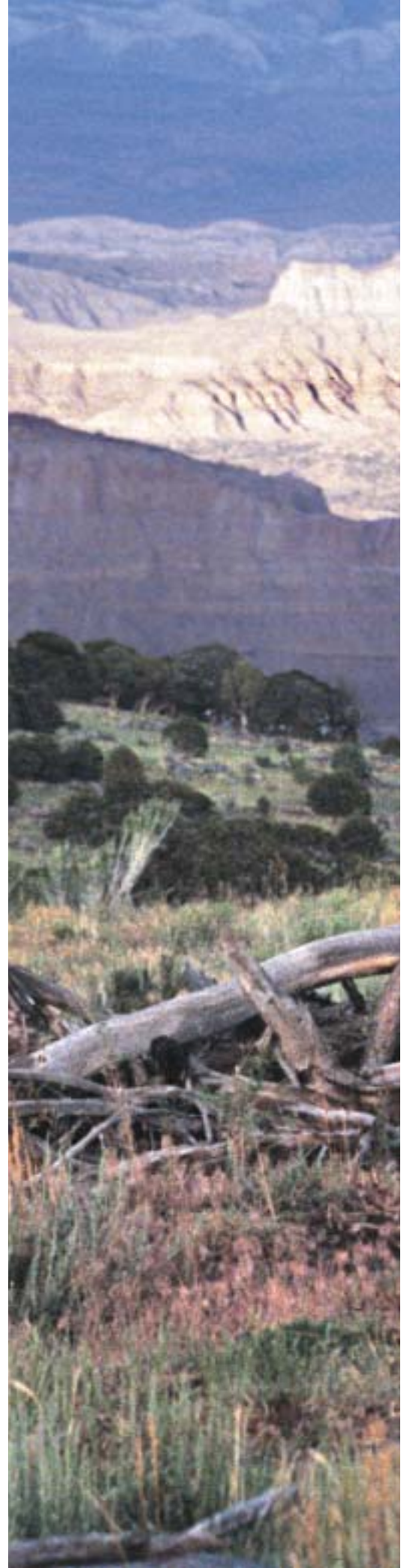
Differences between the Henry Mountains and Yellowstone herds

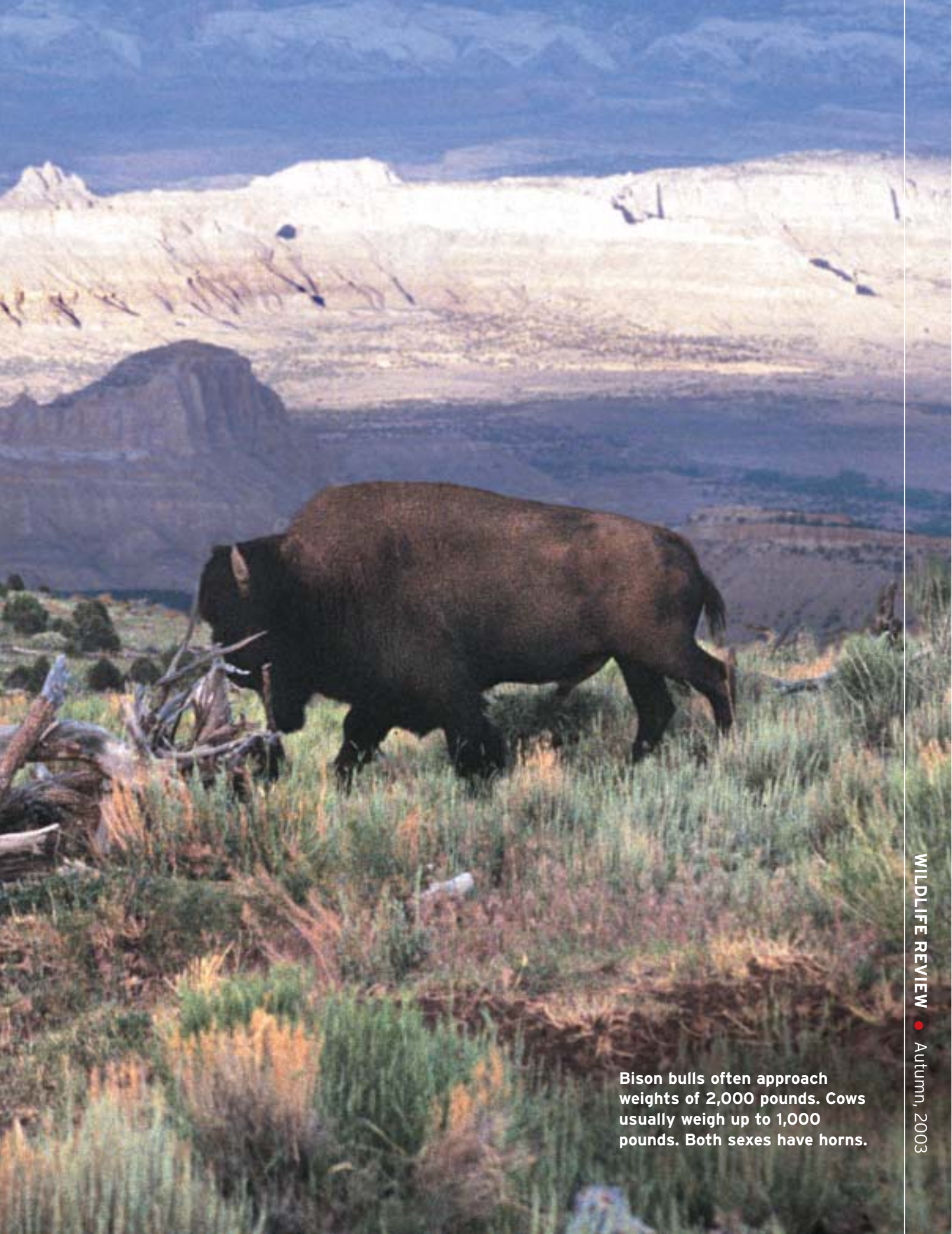
Although this herd originated from Yellowstone National Park, the two herds vary markedly in habitat, behavior, and the way they are managed. The Henry Mountains is a much drier environment than Yellowstone, which makes forage and water sources much less abundant. Still the buffalo have adapted and thrived.

Many people who have been to Yellowstone have observed bison readily—quite often at close distances. In fact, one of the problems Yellowstone officials deal with routinely is that of unwise people getting too close to the buffalo and getting gored (touching an animal is definitely too close)!

This never happens on the Henrys where bison are seldom easy to find. With only 400 head scattered over such a large area, it's possible to look for several days before seeing any buffalo. Even after locating a herd of animals it can be very difficult to approach to within the range of a large telephoto lens, and getting within touching distance is unheard of.

This difference in behavior is undoubtedly caused by differences in management. Yellowstone bison have not been hunted for generations and seem to have little, if any, fear of humans. Hunting, however, has been a part of the management of the Henry Mountains herd since 1960. For the first several years a token number of permits were issued to allow hunters the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to harvest a truly wild and free roaming buffalo. As the bison population grew, hunting became the means used to keep numbers in check. Today it's the most vital tool managers have to balance the herd with the capacity of the range.





Bison bulls often approach weights of 2,000 pounds. Cows usually weigh up to 1,000 pounds. Both sexes have horns.



© GEORGE GRIVET

Sixty years ago, Yellowstone bison were brought to Utah in large wooden crates chained to flatbed trucks.

A unique and challenging hunting experience

The wild nature of these bison and the difficult terrain of the Henry Mountains combine to make this hunt one of the most difficult of any of Utah's big game hunts. On average, hunters are afield for more than a week before harvesting an animal. Some go home empty handed, but almost all agree that this once-in-a-lifetime hunt is the highlight of a career afield. To date, there have been 1,678 buffalo hunters on the Henry Mountains and they have taken a total of 1,482 bison. The fact that this has occurred from a herd that started with only 20 and now numbers around 400 animals could easily stand as a definition of the term "renewable resource."

The herd's future

Lately there have been many reports in the news about the Yellowstone bison and a disease called brucellosis. Brucellosis is a disease that causes bison and cattle to abort their young. The disease currently occurs in Yellowstone bison and has led to

many management problems.

Although all of the bison that were brought to Utah from Yellowstone in the 1940s tested negative for the disease, it was discovered in the herd at a later date.

In the early 1960s, the Department of Fish and Game rounded up all of the bison, tested them for brucellosis and destroyed those that tested positive. From that time to the present, blood samples have been taken from harvested animals and none have tested positive. It was a major undertaking for managers of that time to capture all of the buffalo, but that proactive management in the past has certainly saved untold headaches today.

The Henry Mountains bison herd still faces challenges. For most of the past 12 years below normal precipitation has plagued the Henry Mountains. Many range improvement projects have been done on the mountain and some are ongoing, but despite these efforts the extended drought has made forage scarce and intensified conflicts with livestock interests. A sportsmen's organization,

Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, in conjunction with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, has spent several hundred thousand dollars in the last few years purchasing grazing permits from grazers on the Henrys who were looking to sell. Reserving these permits and the forage they represent for bison will help ensure a positive future for the herd.

Planning efforts are currently underway that may also affect the future of the herd. The DWR is in the initial stages of writing a management plan for the Henry Mountains bison herd. Public comment is welcome and can be voiced at Regional Advisory Council meetings or sent in writing to the DWR office in Price. In addition, the Bureau of Land Management, which administers the land where the herd lives, is currently revising its land use plan. Interested persons are encouraged to send written comments to the BLM at the Richfield or Hanks-ville office.

With careful planning and good management, the Henry Mountains bison herd will remain a unique gem for many generations to come. 🐾

BY PHIL DOUGLASS

NORTHERN REGION CONSERVATION
OUTREACH MANAGER

Memories

THE BEST CATCH OF ALL

"Dad, do fish sleep?"

"Hey Dad, why is my bobber swimming towards me?"

"Mom, look at the baby deer!"

"Dad, Mom — I sure love you!"

OF ALL THE CATCHES that can be netted while fishing, none are treasured more than the memories of fishing with loved ones.

The questions—and the answers that come—are the true "keepers" of family fishing adventures.

Long after the memories of how many fish were caught and how big they were have faded, the memory of how Dad bragged about how he was out-fished by his little fishing pal will never fade. In fact, as time goes by, those memories will grow even brighter.

Thousands of people in Utah introduce their children to fishing each year. When asked why they decided to take their kids fishing,

many of them say, "I had such a great time fishing with my parents or grandparents, I decided to dust off my old fishing rod and experience the same joys with my kids."

Of all the fish that an angler touches in a lifetime, they pale in

comparison to the gentle squeeze and sparkling eyes that accompany "thanks for taking me fishing."

So, what is it about fishing memories that make them such special treasures? Some things are hard to explain. And to try and explain them just seems to muddy things up. Besides, it's more fun to make memories than to think of why we make them! But there are common threads that help weave the wonderfully warm tapestry of fishing memories. These "threads" include: Anticipation; Breathtaking Experiences; and Saving and Revisiting the Moment.

Anticipation

It has been said that happiness is sometimes as simple as having something to look forward to.

Gene Snow, co-founder of Angler's Inn, recently recalled the preparation and anticipation of his first fishing trip to Strawberry Reservoir in 1943:

"My first trip to Strawberry was earned by tying some flies. I remember being very excited making preparations for the trip. We took over three hours and finally arrived about 5 p.m. We fished until after dark. Only one fish was caught between us. I was cold and had wet feet but kept my complaints to myself. By the time



DREW CUSHING

we packed up, stopped in Heber for a hamburger and finished the drive home, it was 1:30 a.m. But [still] I went to sleep anticipating my next trip to Strawberry.”

Richard and Mimi Garrett of Farmington eyed a new fishing boat recently, anticipating spending more time on the water. “I guarantee you that we are going to spend some time away from the house (fishing) this summer,” Richard said. The problem that the Garrett’s (who moved to Utah from California) encountered was not knowing where to go for fishing information.

The Division of Wildlife Resources produces many publications that can help introduce newcomers of any age to great fishing spots. The DWR also has information officers who are very willing to give tips on exploring Utah’s vast fishing opportunities. With good information

sources, planning can and should be an important part of anticipation.

Making it fun

There is no shortage of inventive, yet simple ways, to make fishing fun: Accuracy and distance casting contests, lure races, seeing how many birds you can sound like, seeing how many birds sound like you!

If you notice that you or your young ones are getting bored with the same fishing hole, try something different. From the High Uintas to the Boulder Mountains to Lake Powell, and everywhere in between, are fishing adventures and breathtaking scenery. In Utah there are a lifetime of different places to try, as well as different kinds of fish to catch.

Never underestimate the power of food, being comfortable and just having a good time together. Sometimes, the burger on the way home is almost as memorable as the fishing!

Saving and revisiting the moment

Creating poems, sayings and even making up songs about fishing help make fishing trips memorable. Diaries, journals, photos, carvings and castings of footprints in the mud can all add to your fishing memory treasure chest. It’s not always practical to take along a video camera but when you capture the expressions and effort of catching the big one, or pulling in a floppy ole’ boot, you’ll be glad you “caught it” on tape.

Saving the memories helps you savor the experience and also helps kindle the flame of anticipation for your next trip.

The happiness that comes from fishing together with loved ones is perhaps best expressed by Isaak Walton:

“It is idle time that is not idly spent.”

Just ask any family with fishing memories—I’m sure they’ll agree. 🐟



TOM PETTINGILL

BY TERRY MESSMER & BRAD CROMPTON

SAGE-GROUSE RETURN TO

Gordon Creek

GREATER Sage-grouse populations have declined throughout much of the western United States in recent decades. Sage-grouse in Utah have not been immune to these region-wide declines. Despite years of research and conservation efforts, Greater Sage-grouse today occupy only 41 percent of their historic habitat in Utah. The reason for this decline is not well understood.

There are some bright spots, however. Despite declines across the state, Greater Sage-grouse populations on Parker Mountain in Wayne, Piute and Garfield counties appear to be increasing. Record numbers of male sage-grouse were counted on leks (breeding grounds) in spring 2001 and 2002.

One reason for this increase is specific management actions directed at sage-grouse in the area. These efforts are a result of the cooperation of a local working group known as

the Parker Mountain Adaptive Resource Management Working Group, or PARM. This group is chaired by local ranchers and includes representatives of various public and private land and wildlife management agencies and organizations. For more information about PARM, visit www.grazingnet.org on the Internet.

With the recent increases in sage-grouse, Parker Mountain could be a source population of sage-grouse for limited transplants into other areas across Utah.

Wildlife transplants consist of animals from a source area being captured and moved to new areas where good habitat is available, or to areas where the local population is very low. Transplants of big game animals and wild turkeys in Utah have been very successful.

There have been relatively few Greater Sage-grouse transplanting efforts in Utah, and transplants that have taken place in Utah and in surrounding states have met with mixed results.

A cooperative effort, endorsed by the Parker Mountain Working Group, was initiated in 2001 to transplant sage-grouse to the Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area west of Price. The Gordon Creek WMA includes lands owned by the Division of Wildlife Resources. Vari-



© CRAIG CLYDE

Sage-grouse display colorful, noisy behavior in the spring courting season.



ous habitat enhancement projects have been completed and are underway on the WMA. Before the transplant, the last confirmed Greater Sage-grouse observation in the area was in 1991.

Greater Sage-grouse were captured during summer 2002 using a spotlight to locate and temporarily immobilize the grouse. A dipnet or a netgun was then used to place a net over the birds and capture them. A total of 37 birds were captured from three different populations: Parker Mountain in Wayne County, Tava-puts Plateau in Carbon County, and Emma Park in Carbon County. Radio transmitters were placed on several birds to track their movements and the habitats they used.

Results of this original transplant have been mixed. The birds dispersed over a broad area immediately after they were released. Three of the eight grouse with radio transmitters were killed within three months of the release. The remaining grouse appear to be adjusting nicely to their new homes. Further transplant efforts will be done during spring mating seasons. This will improve the



chances of sage-grouse breeding in the area and starting a new population. It's hoped that this newly formed population can form a bridge

between isolated sage-grouse populations across central and eastern Utah. This in turn could improve Greater Sage-grouse abundance and distribution throughout their range.

Transplant efforts such as these are a result of cooperation. Local working groups such as PARM; county governments; land management agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, Utah School and Institutional Trustlands, the DWR, and the USDA Wildlife Services; livestock operators; local communities; faculty and students from Utah State University Extension; and the Jack H. Berryman Institute, all played important roles and will continue to be important partners in Greater Sage-grouse conservation in Utah. 🐾



The Gordon Creek WMA is the new home of transplanted sage-grouse.

“Despite declines across the state, Greater Sage-grouse populations on Parker Mountain appear to be increasing.”



BY LARRY DALTON
CONSERVATION OUTREACH SECTION CHIEF

NEW COORDINATOR

Outdoors women

THE UTAH DIVISION of Wildlife Resources has sponsored a Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) program for several years. However, financial uncertainties at the DWR caused the program to be scaled back in recent months and RaLynne Takeda, the DWR's BOW coordinator, was transferred to the division's Hunter Education program. Utah's outdoors women expressed displeasure at the cut-back and Nancy Hoff, a BOW participant, stepped forward to make the program continue. A volunteer with the DWR, Hoff will serve as the division's new BOW coordinator.

Becoming an Outdoors Woman is a popular DWR program for women to hone outdoor skills.



al BOW activities for the fall. Check out the DWR's Web site (wildlife.utah.gov/bow) where you can learn about upcoming events, reserve your spot in a program and communicate with Nancy.

BOW events this fall include the following:

Fishing Clinic for Woman at Silver Lake, Saturday, Sept. 20: Pack your lunch and learn spin-cast and fly-fishing techniques while fishing

(Congratulations to Nancy; she is a biochemist by trade and an outdoors woman in everyday life. She has taken charge and has planned sever-

(\$15 registration fee includes light refreshments. Equipment and bait and/or lures will be provided.)

Hunter Education for Women, Wednesday evenings (6 to 9 p.m.) and Saturday mornings (9 a.m. to noon) starting Oct. 22 and ending Nov. 8 at the Lee Kay Center for Hunter Education in Salt Lake City. The DWR certification requires 12 hours of classroom instruction and a supervised shooting activity on a gun range (\$10 registration fee, which includes the Utah Hunter Education fee and light refreshments.)

Upland Bird Hunt for Women on a game farm in Nephi, Saturday, Nov. 15. Bring your shotgun and lunch and put your newly learned skills and Hunter Education certification to work by participating in an upland game bird hunt (\$45 registration fee for two birds. Includes light refreshments.) 🦅





BY JO PROCTOR,
DWR COORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEERS

NATIONAL recognition FOR DEDICATED HUNTERS

CONGRATULATIONS dedicated hunters! Your good work on behalf of Utah's wildlife and wildlife habitat isn't just local news anymore. U.S. Forest Service brass and members of the U.S. House of Representatives have their eyes on you since the Spanish Fork Ranger District of the Uinta National Forest nominated Utah's Dedicated Hunter program for the "2003 Director — Senior, Youth and Volunteer Exemplary Volunteer Service Award."

I was honored to travel to Washington D.C. to accept the award on June 5, 2003 on behalf of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR). Pete Karpp, Uinta National Forest supervisor, said the Dedicated Hunter program has been a "source of enthusiastic individuals who are often able to complete highly technical and complex work. And without their donated use of special equipment, many projects would not have been completed. Dedicated hunters have been instrumental in habitat and facilities improvement."

Arthur Bryant, national director

of the U.S. Forest Service's volunteer program, said, "It is impossible to measure or overestimate the importance, usefulness, and value of the volunteer work accomplished and the public service provided by volunteers." And Utah Congressman Chris Cannon said, "The commitment and hard work you have all rendered over the years to the Spanish Fork Ranger District is greatly appreciated and highly admirable. The result of your countless efforts and hard work is admirable and provides an excellent example to many. The state of Utah will continue to be a great place for families to reside with individuals like you leading the way through hard work and volunteer service."

I agree with the U.S. Forest Service representatives and Congressman Cannon. You've done a terrific job helping land management agencies manage Utah's wildlife and their habitats. Receiving this award is a great honor for each of us, so go ahead and give yourself a pat on the back!

Dedicated Hunters who have served in the war on terrorism

Some good news for dedicated

hunters who haven't completed their yearly program requirements because they've been deployed or mobilized for military service in 2003—you can still receive a buck deer permit for this fall's hunts.

To receive your permit, you need to present a copy of your military orders to the Division of Wildlife Resources as soon as possible.

Your help in making wildlife management decisions is still needed, however, so your requirement for attendance at a Regional Advisory Council meeting (as fulfillment for part of your second year program requirements) will now be required in your third year in the program.

Some of you will remain deployed or mobilized for military service during the 2003 general season buck deer hunts and won't be able to participate in the hunts. You can receive a refund equivalent to one-third of the original cost for your Certificate of Registration by contacting the DWR within one year of the end of the 2003 hunting season authorized by your permit.

Things you don't want to forget about this fall's hunt

1. You must carry your Certificate of Registration (COR) with your dedicated hunter permit while hunting. If you've misplaced your COR, you can get it replaced for \$5 at any DWR office.

2. You won't be required to complete an annual harvest questionnaire. This information will be collected via the telephone, and only some of the dedicated hunters will be contacted.

3. You can avoid being credited with taking a deer by returning your unused permit, with its attached tag, to a DWR office. You can also mail it to: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Attention: Dedicated Hunter Program, P.O. Box 146301, Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-6301. Your unused permit and attached tag must be received by January 15, 2004.

4. Submitting your unused permit by January 15, 2004 could make you eligible for automatic entry into the 2004 Dedicated Hunter Limited Entry Drawing.

5. If you'd like to change your region hunt choice for the 2004 hunt season, you must submit your request in writing to the DWR by January 15, 2004.

Change of address

If your address changes, please let us know. It's difficult to get permits and other information to you if we don't have your correct address. (You wouldn't want a Paunsagunt deer permit you obtained in the Dedicated Hunter Limited Entry Drawing mailed to the wrong address!) If your address changes, please contact your regional DWR volunteer specialist. You can reach your specialist by calling your regional DWR office or by visiting the Dedicated Hunter Web

site, where e-mail addresses are listed for each specialist.

Dedicated Hunter hats and decals

The first shipment of dedicated hunter hats and window decals went

obtained with a \$10 donation. Decals (2" X 4") are available for a \$2 donation. You'll look good wearing one of these cool hats, so pick up one, along with a Dedicated Hunter decal, at DWR offices.

"You've done a terrific job helping land management agencies manage Utah's wildlife and their habitats."

faster than we thought they would. If you missed out, you're still in luck because the second shipment has arrived! These hats and decals display the Dedicated Hunter program logo of two deer sparing in full color. Hats (available in either hunter orange or Kaki with a brown bill) can be

Regional Advisory Council Meeting (RAC)

The DWR will propose some "house-keeping" modifications to the Dedicated Hunter Program Rule during the September/October round of RACs and at the Wildlife Board meeting. See you there! 🍖



Many wildlife-related projects become reality through the work of nationally recognized, Utah Dedicated Hunters.



BY SERGEANT TONY WOOD

On patrol

CONSERVATION OFFICERS

AN INCIDENT in southeastern Utah is one example of the important role citizens play in fighting wildlife crimes in Utah. Here are some wildlife law enforcement highlights from the past few months:

Fish poachers caught

In May, two anglers—backpacking with fishing poles into the roadless area of the Fish Creek drainage in southeastern Utah—were advised by a camper about the special fishing regulations on Upper Fish Creek. After the anglers left, the camper contacted Utah Division of Wildlife Resources Conservation Officer Stacey Taggart, who arrived on horseback. The camper provided Taggart with a physical description of the anglers and their vehicles.

Taggart soon spotted the pair as they were leaving the area and questioned them about their activities on the stream. They said a camper told them the streams were

closed to fishing, so they decided to hike to Gooseberry Reservoir to fish. Once they started hiking they realized Gooseberry was a lot farther than they anticipated, so they decid-

ed to return to their vehicles. They offered their backpacks to Taggart, who searched them but didn't find any fish. She then went up the stream to check the area. About 4.5 miles from the trailhead on Gooseberry Creek, four large cutthroat trout, litter and evidence was found that indicted the two anglers she had interviewed had been fishing and had left the cutthroats to waste alongside the stream.

Taggart went back to the trailhead and found the anglers in their camp. She also found evidence in the camp that linked them to the evidence along the stream. After considerable interviewing, the anglers confessed to catching the fish and leaving them along the stream to waste. They said they knew they were not supposed to fish there, so instead of bringing the fish out, they left them "for the birds to eat."

The two poachers were charged with Wanton Destruction of Protected Wildlife; Fishing in Closed Waters, and Allowing Protected Wildlife to Waste. Each poacher was fined \$750 and their fishing license privileges may be suspended.



Conservation officers are well trained in a variety of law enforcement skills.

This case is a great example of how good informant information, reported in a timely manner, is key to apprehending those who break Utah's wildlife laws. Because of the excellent information he provided, the informant is being considered for a monetary reward. Please do your part to be a good witness and protect Utah's wildlife resources by reporting wildlife crimes to the HELP STOP POACHING hotline at 1-800-662-DEER or *DEER on your cell phone.

Birds poisoned

Federal and state wildlife officers investigated the poisoning of approximately 1,000 birds near the West Fields agricultural section of Springville in north-central Utah this spring. The birds consumed poison bait and died within a short distance of the bait site. The poisoned birds included 580 Red-winged Blackbirds, 238 Brewers Blackbirds, 84 Cowbirds, 81 Starlings, 12 English Sparrows and 2 Red-tailed Hawks. Most of these birds are federally protected.

Conservation officers from the DWR quickly responded to the scene to survey and pick up the birds before any birds of prey, or other predators, fed on the poisoned carcasses. Wildlife law enforcement officers remind people across Utah that indiscriminate poisoning kills many wildlife species and can be punishable with significant fines and possible jail time.

Bull elk poached

The DWR is offering a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the illegal taking of a bull elk on Danish Bench by the Huntington Power Plant in central Utah. The bull was apparently shot during the antlerless elk hunt in December or January. Its head and antlers were sawed off, and the rest of the bull was left to rot. Depending on the information received, the reward may be as high as \$1,000 or a Central Mountains, Manti mature

bull permit. Conservation Officer Kip Draper in Emery County is leading the investigation. If you know who poached this bull, please call Draper at (435) 749-1492 or call the DWR Help Stop Poaching Hotline at 800-662-DEER. All information will be held in strict confidentiality, and the caller may remain anonymous.

Strawberry Reservoir violations

DWR conservation officers held compliance check stations at Strawberry Reservoir on June 22 and found several anglers in violation of the 2003 fishing regulations at the reservoir. Thirty-six anglers received written citations for violating the regulations, and 48 fish were seized. Conservation officers remind anglers to learn the fishing regulations at Strawberry. Officers will hold additional compliance checkpoints in the future. The number of officers working at the reservoir has been increased in a continued effort to ensure compliance with regulations at the state's most popular fishery.

Help from a concerned citizen

On July 17, a Tooele County man observed a male subject "stalking" a large five-point mule deer. The subject was carrying some type of archery equipment, possibly a cross-bow. Angry that someone was attempting to poach the animal, the man began to honk his horn and yell at the individual. Upon hearing the shouts, the would-be poacher turned and ran several hundred yards across a field, into a treeline.

The man then called the Help Stop Poaching Hotline. Despite a thorough search of the area by Officer Jerry Schlappi, the poacher was never located. The subject was described as very hairy, with dark, bushy "pork chop" sideburns and a long, bushy, dark goatee that may have been lighter on the tip. The person was approximately six feet tall and very skinny, approximately 150 pounds.

We encourage anyone with

information about this incident to contact the Help Stop Poaching hotline at 1-800-662-3337.

Help Stop Poaching Hotline

Through June 2003, the DWR had received 161 violation reports on its toll-free Help Stop Poaching Hotline. The hotline is staffed 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year, by citizen volunteers who want to assist with Utah's anti-poaching efforts. Please report wildlife crime by calling 1-800-662-DEER (3337). Most wireless phone users may dial *DEER to reach us toll free.

Law enforcement section happenings

Kevin Cherry recently retired after 28 years with the DWR. He had served as a sergeant in the Central Region for the past 12 years. Cherry was a stalwart supporter of his officers and an active UPEA member. His dedication to Utah's wildlife and his fellow officers was greatly appreciated and will be missed.

Officer **Gary McKell** also retired after 30 years of service. McKell had served as the Zion district conservation officer since 1981. He also served as a field training officer and was a mentor to many of the officers now serving throughout Utah. Respected by fellow officers and the public, McKell's steady influence will be missed.

Newly hired conservation officers **David Beveridge** and **Vance Mumford** recently began their district assignments. Beveridge is serving in the east Weber district. Mumford will patrol the Moab district.

Sergeant **Mark Bearnson**, officer **Garrett Whatcott** and Lee Kay Center Assistant Manager **Richard Barkow** remain on assignment with the United States armed forces, supporting military operations in Iraq and elsewhere. Their fellow Wildlife Resources law enforcement employees wish them the best of luck and hope for their safe and speedy return. 🐾

Distance Champion Fly Caster), evening entertainment, cooking demonstrations and food, watch Kokanee salmon run up Strawberry River, educational programs, special activities for kids and a chance to win fabulous prizes.

September 20

Raptor Watch Day

View migrating raptors (birds of prey) at Squaw Peak, which is along the Provo Canyon

AUTUMN 2003

UTAH WILDLIFE CALENDAR

Find more calendar information online at www.wildlife.utah.gov/calendar

September

September 4-14

Utah State Fair

"Take Me Fishing" is the theme for this year's State Fair exhibit. Come visit us to see wildlife and live fish in our aquariums.

Fish pond at the State Fair

Those 13 years old or younger may participate in this fun activity. Prior to fishing, each child will attend the 30-minute "Pathways to Fishing" clinic to learn about fish, fishing equipment, fishing safety and fishing ethics. Then, each child will be given a rod and reel and may fish on the pond for 30 minutes or until a fish is caught, whichever comes first. Adult volunteers will be available to help them fish. Rules are catch-and-release with a one-fish limit. The "Pathways" clinic opens to the general public at 4:00 p.m. and continues every half hour until 7:00 p.m. The pond closes after the last class has had its half hour of fishing.

September 11

Wildlife Board Meeting

Natural Resources auditorium, 1594 W. North Temple, Salt Lake City. Topics include: Fishing Proclamation & Rule R657-13; Fish stocking policy; Regional drainage management plans; Additional antlerless permits.

Friday, September 12 - Sunday, 14

Strawberry Valley Wildlife Festival

Friday: noon - 8:00 p.m.; Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.; Sunday: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This fun and educational family experience will be held at Daniels Summit Lodge and the Strawberry Fish Trap. Activities include a chance to cast with Jim Gunderson (Western

road east of Orem. With any luck, clear skies will offer up close glimpses of harriers, vultures, eagles, hawks and falcons as they continue their annual migration to the south. For more information contact Bob Walters at (801) 538-4771.

Becoming an Outdoors Woman

Fishing Clinic for Woman at Silver Lake, Saturday, Sept. 20: Pack your lunch and learn spin-cast and fly-fishing techniques while fishing (\$15 registration fee includes light refreshments. Equipment and bait and/or lures will be provided. RSVP required since participation is limited to 30 people.)

October

October 9

Wildlife Board Meeting

Natural Resources auditorium, 1594 W. North Temple, Salt Lake City. Topics include: Dedicated Hunter rule; Lifetime hunting and fishing license rule; Turkey addendum and rule; Turkey permit allocation; Canceled hunt procedures (new); Landowner permit rule; Commercial hunting area rule; Mule deer management plan revision.

October 11

Hardware Ranch Elk Festival

View and learn about Rocky Mountain elk and other local wildlife at this great family event that runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Hardware Ranch is located up Blacksmith Fork Canyon. More information online at: HardwareRanch.com.

October 22 - November 8

Becoming an Outdoors Woman

Hunter Education for Women, Wednesday evenings (6 to 9 p.m.) and Saturday mornings (9 a.m. to noon) starting Oct. 22 and ending Nov. 8 at the Lee Kay Center for Hunter Education in Salt Lake City. The DWR certification requires 12 hours of classroom instruction and a supervised shooting activity on a gun range (\$10 registration fee, which includes the Utah Hunter Education fee and light refreshments. RSVP required since participation is limited to 30 people.)

November

November 13

Wildlife Board meeting

Dept. Natural Resources auditorium, 1594 W. North Temple, Salt Lake City. Topics include: Bucks/bulls proc. & rule R657-5 (2-yr proc. adopted in 2002); CWMU approval; Conservation permit allocations; Board sets meeting dates for 2004.

November 14 & 15

Moab bighorn sheep watch

On Friday evening Bill Bates will provide a lecture, video and PowerPoint show on bighorn sheep at the Moab Information Center, located at the corner of Center and Main at 7 p.m. On Saturday morning at 8 a.m., we will meet at the Moab Information Center and will carpool and/or caravan to locations around Moab where we hope to find bighorn sheep. Each group will be guided by a biologist and/or conservation officer. Participants should bring binoculars, a spotting scope (if they have one), beverage and snacks. Field trips generally terminate by noon or early afternoon. For more information, call Brent Stettler at: 435-636-0266. There is no cost for the event. No pre-registration is required. Everyone is welcome.

November 15

Becoming an Outdoors Woman

Upland Bird Hunt for Women on a game farm in Nephi, Saturday, Nov. 15. Bring your shotgun and lunch and put your newly learned skills and Hunter Education certification to work by participating in an upland game bird hunt (\$45 registration fee for two birds. Includes light refreshments. RSVP required since participation is limited to 30 people.)

December

December 18

Wildlife Board meeting

(Salt Lake City) Topics include: Bear Proclamation/Rule R657-33; Sensitive species rule.

2003 tentative hunting season dates

Upland Game

Morning Dove,	<i>Sept. 1 - Sept. 30, 2003</i>
Band-tailed Pigeon,	<i>Sept. 1 - Sept. 30, 2003</i>
White-tailed Ptarmigan,	<i>Sept. 6 - Oct. 12, 2003</i>
Forest Grouse (Blue/Ruffed),	<i>Sept. 13 - Nov. 30, 2003</i>
Sandhill Crane,*	<i>Sept. 2003</i>
Chukar Partridge,*	<i>Sept. 20, '03 - Jan. 31, '04</i>
Sage-grouse,*	<i>Sept. 20 - Sept. 28, 2003</i>
Hungarian Partridge,*	<i>Sept. 20, '03 - Jan. 31, '04</i>
Sharp-tailed Grouse,	<i>Nov. 1 - Nov. 9, 2003</i>
Pheasant,*	<i>Nov. 1 - Nov. 30, 2003</i>
Youth Hunt,**	<i>Nov. 8, 2003</i>
Quail (California/ Gambel's),*	<i>Nov. 1 - Dec. 31, 2003</i>
Cottontail Rabbit,	<i>Sept. 20, '03 - Feb. 29, '04</i>
Snowshoe Hare,	<i>Sept. 20, '03 - Feb. 29, '04</i>
Turkey,	<i>March 29 - May 31, 2003</i>

Waterfowl

Opener,	<i>Oct. 4, 2003</i>
Youth Day,	<i>Sept. 27, 2003</i>

Black Bear

Fall Hunt,	<i>Aug. - Sept. 2003, Nov 2003</i>
Spring Hunt,	<i>April - May 2004</i>

Cougar

Limited Entry,*	<i>Dec. 15, '02 - Dec. 12, '03</i>
Harvest Objective,*	<i>Dec. 15, '02 - Dec. 12, '03</i>

Furbearer

Badger, Gray fox, Kit fox, Ringtail, Spotted Skunk, Weasel	<i>Oct 12, 2002 - Feb 16, 2003</i>
Beaver, Mink**	<i>Oct 12, 2002 - Feb 16, 2003</i>
Bobcat	<i>Nov 20, 2002 - Feb 16, 2003</i>
Marten	<i>Oct 12, 2002 - Feb 16, 2003</i>

Bucks, Bulls, Once-in-a-Lifetime

Deer	Archery	<i>Aug. 16 - Sep 12, 2003</i>
	Muzzleloader	<i>Sept. 24 - Oct 2, 2003</i>
	Rifle	<i>Oct. 18 - Oct 26, 2003</i>
	Limited Entry	<i>(See Proclamation)</i>
Elk	Archery	<i>Aug. 21 - Sept. 12, 2003</i>
	Rifle	<i>Oct. 4 - Oct. 16, 2003</i>
	Muzzleloader	<i>Nov. 1 - Nov. 9, 2003</i>
	Limited Entry	<i>(See Proclamation)</i>
Pronghorn*	Archery	<i>Aug. 16 - Sept. 12, 2003</i>
	Any Legal Weapon	<i>Sept. 13 - Sept. 23, 2003</i>
Bull Moose*		<i>Sept. 13 - Oct 26, 2003</i>
Bison*		<i>Nov. 1 - Dec 31, 2003</i>
Desert Bighorn Sheep*		<i>Sept. 20 - Dec 31, 2003</i>
Bighorn Rocky Mountain*		<i>Sept. 27 - Nov 30, 2003</i>
Rocky Mountain Goat*		<i>Sept. 13 - Oct 19, 2003</i>

* Dates given are aggregates of multiple hunts.

** See proclamation for closed areas. Some dates are tentative. Refer to the 2003/2004 proclamations for exact season dates.

2003 application periods

Cougar,	<i>Sept. 30 - Oct. 15, 2003</i>
Bobcat,	<i>Oct. 13- Nov. 7, 2003</i>
Sportsman,	<i>Nov. 5-19, 2003 (results posted Dec. 10, 2003)</i>
Turkey	<i>Dec. 2003 (results posted Feb. 14, 2004)</i>

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Information hotline: 1 (801) 596-8660
 Toll-free info. hotline: 1 (877) 592-5169
 National fishing hotline: 1 (800) 275-3474
 Utah bird line: 1 (801) 538-4730
 Cougar harvest objective hotline: 1 (888) 668-5466
 Poaching hotline: 1 (800) 662-DEER
 Web site address: www.wildlife.utah.gov



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